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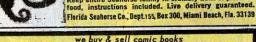
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"A RIOTOUS ROUND-UP OF RIDICULOUS RUMORS AND RABELAISIAN REPORTS!"

ITEM! It's time to play artistic musical | DEVIL can spare him for a while. But | chairs again! We were all rapping in the Bullpen the other day and a few of our peerless pencil-pushers were mentioning vario's strips they'd like to draw. So, we thought it would be a kick to make a switcheroo or two and see what happens. Here's how it all came out: Starting with ish #107, the fabulous FANTASTIC FOUR will be drawn by the Big Man himself, none other than JOHN BUSCEMA! Meanwhile, ol' RING-A-DING ROMITA, who's been pining for his favorite strip, will once again take over the artistic reins of SPIDER-MAN - at least until the next switch-over session. However, the adorable AVENGERS won't be completely Buscema-less, 'cause John's brother SAL BUSCEMA will replace J.B. in drawing the most superhero-filled spectaculars of all. Y'know, it just occurs to us, we oughtta publish scorecards - 'cause here at mixed-up Marvel, you can't tell who's doing what without one!

ITEM! We sure hope you caught SPIDEY'S recent ish #92 - the one featuring ICEMAN. The reason we mention it is that our chilly little cherub was such a smash hit in that yarn that we've been toving with the idea of giving Iceman a strip of his own. So, as soon as we can find an artist and writer who can stand the temperature (ouch!), don't be too surprised-

ITEM! We may not be the biggest staff in the world, but we sure are becoming the most widely travelled! Every time we turn around, it seems that one of our guys or gals is either heading overseas or just returning from there. As these portentous words are being penned, RASCALLY ROY THOMAS has just completed a three-weeks sojourn in Great Britain: and even as he headed back to the welcoming Bullpen, JUMBO JOHNNY VERPOORTEN, our demon penciller, inker, and brand-new production chief, just started winging his way towards a vacation in West Germany! (We kinda hope he remembered to take a plane!) Then, exactly five minutes ago, GENIAL GENE COLAN phoned to tell us he's leaving for Europe in a couple of days - if CAPTAIN AMERICA and DARE. in, mostly telling us that it didn't make

don't worry, we know he'll be back soon - we scared him by saying that HONEST IRVING FORBUSH has been practicing drawing both those strips - and you know what a threat of Iry can be!

ITEM! Speaking of overseas voyagers, BASHFUL BARRY SMITH has finally completed arrangements to emigrate from England and make little old New York his home. We're pleased as punch with this new development, especially since it seems that Barry's newest mag, CONAN THE BARBARIAN, promises to be one of the biggest comic-magazine smash hits of the decade. So who can blame us for not wanting to let this young, talented Britisher out of our sight?

ITEM! We try to make it a point not to plug any of our titles too enthusiastically on this page, because these are supposed to be news items rather than hardsell ads. However, once in a great while a magazine comes along which is so special, so unusually exciting, that we just have to tell you about it. Such a mag is THOR #104, featuring the saga of "The World Beyond!" It introduces a whole new concept in far-out fantasy, and brings you such mysterious characters as The Silent One, and - Infinity! We predict that this issue will create as much of a stir as the FANTASTIC FOUR created years ago when it first introduced the uncanny Inhumans. The artwork by BIG JOHN BUSCEMA is just not to be believed - and STAN THE MAN'S script - well, it's somethin' else! Okay, that's the end of the plug - you know bow we hate to brag!

ITFM! Remember some months ago when we tried a little experiment? We wrote an entire SPIDER-MAN story without using exclamation points - except where they were really needed. We wanted to see if the exclamation points were really necessary insofar as giving a comic strip that certain feeling of excitement. Well, apparently there aren't that many punctuation buffs among you, because we didn't receive as much mail as we expected about this earth-shattering subject. Just a few letters straggled

much difference whether we used the ex. points or not. So, instead of making a major policy change, we'll leave this monumental matter to the discretion of each individual writer - and that takes care of that!

STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

One thing we've always promised to do is level with you. After all, you're both our reader, and our friend and no one is more deserving of being taken into our confidence. Therefore, we want to give you the straight scoop as to why the SILVER SURFER is no longer being published. In a nutshell, we had to drop it - 'cause it was losing money! But. as you may guess, there's a bit more to the story than that. Actually, the Surfer was one of our biggest successes from the standpoint of reader acceptance. Those who bought it were fanatical about it. The silvery sky-rider became an almost immediate sensation on campuses thruout the free world. Announcers on FM radio stations began to quote from the stories and to read portions of them over the air. The Surfer's philosophical musings were actually discussed in pulpits thruout the nation. Truly, we had succeeded in our goal - we had created a comic book for the older reader, for the more literate, more perceptive, more cognizant fan. But, in so doing, the Surfer's exploits were too far over the heads of many of our younger readers, and for that reason, we lost a great many sales, since no comic magazine can be financially successful unless it sells to young and old alike. Finally, we realized there were only two choices - drop the magazine, or change the format so that it would be more acceptable to the younger reader. Rather than compromise our own integrity, or be untrue to our own objectives, we have chosen to discontinue the magazine. Needless to say, your own comments and opinions on this matter will be very much appreciated.





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**SPIDER'S WEB

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

THE MARVEL COMICS GROUP, SECOND FLOOR 625 MADISON AV., NEW YORK ,N. Y. 10022

Dear Stan.

Here's a hit of info I'm sure will interest you guys. Being a faithful member of Marvelmania International, I always carry my membership card in my wallet, along with my license and

Last Friday night while driving home from the Nepentha by way of the F.D.R. Drive in my Porsche, the local police pulled me over as I was about to exit for the bridge to Ye Grande Brooklyn. I was only doing about 85 but the crew in blue didn't appreciate my over-indulgence.

They asked me for my license and registration. I complied immediately but in my hurry I didn't realize that my M.M.I. card was between my license and registration.

The man returned to me my license, registration, and card with a few words of wisdom: anyone who reads Marvel Comics and has a Spider-Man decal on his car door can't be all bad. He let me go and I have you guys to thank. Thanks, you saved my license

I would also like you guys to know that there are a lot of hip cops who read your mags, off duty of course.

Larry Glassman, 2271 Knapp Street Brooklyn, N.Y. 11229

Okay, Larry, so you got a break-and we hope that you learned a lesson from your narrow brush with the law (and, though you might not have noticed him peering over your shoulder, with death). But we sincerely hope that you don't count on your Marvelmania card to save you again-because the next argument you have might be with another speeding car or a brick wall, not an understanding policeman. And if you were just putting us on-there's nothing funny about doing 85 on a public bridge, man. We weren't amused-and we hope nobody else reading your letter will be, either.

End of comment.

Dear Stan, John, and Jim,

Though Marvel has the best mags in the human-interest field, when it comes to scientific accuracy-yeach!

No amount of radioactivity in the blood will affect someone the way that in Pete's blood supposedly affects him. I had a theory on how the spider's bite did give him his powers, but by this theory, he couldn't possibly lose them. This theory satisfied me, and then came issue #86.

By the time this reaches you, it will be too late; but perhaps my highly scientific theory will be of interest anyhow.

The characteristics of any living organism (Pete, for instance, or the spider,) are determined by the arrangement of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) molecules in the chromosomes of the body cells.

Now, normally, this arrangement of DNA molecules is set, and can't be changed. But Pete's parents were, at some time, exposed to some unknown kind of radiation which didn't affect them, but which affected the DNA in the chromosomes they passed on to Pete. (Pete's parents-being government agents certainly gave them an excellent opportunity to be exposed to some unknown radiation : . .)

The effect this had on Pete's chromosomal DNA was to make it unstable, and changeable.

Then, when the radioactive spider bit him, the radiation combined with the instability of his DNA caused the DNA molecules to shift, and become similar to the DNA molecules of the spider, and he obtained the characteristics of the spider.

But, the radiation leaving his blood wouldn't destroy his powers once his DNA was changed. (Oh, well, I haven't read issue *87 yet, so I don't know what you're going to have happen, so maybe you can still accept my theory.)

By the way, spiders don't cling to walls with "stickum," but with little hooks on their feet. Since the radiation only made Pete similar, but not exactly like a spider, the hooks on his palms and feet are still small, and microscopic, instead of huge, and proportionately the size of the spider's. This explains how Pete can: cling to a wall while wearing thin socks and gloves, but not while wearing shoes; the hooks can protrude between the cloth

Well, now that I've thoroughly bored you, I'll say 'Nuff Said, and how!

> Todd Bake, 15430 Rossini Detroit, Michigan 48205

Oh, you haven't bored us, Todd-just given us and Marveldom Assembled something to mull over and discuss at length for the next dozen years or so. How about it, frantic ones? Anybody out there care to comment on how those little hooks (if such they truly be) could ever protrude thru a pair of size ten loafers?



Q. What does Gwendolyn say when Peter Parker is with another girl?

A: Keep your paws off my Parker!! Mark Anderson, 234 Central Park Ave. Wilmette, III, 60091

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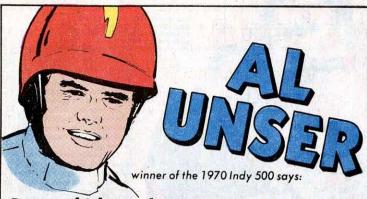
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Donald Ward enrolled at FAS when he was a teenager and today works in the largest advertising agency in Akron, Ohio. His portfolio of work was enough to get him a job on a staff of 6 artists.

Homer Collins, of Albany, Ga., left a job in an insurance company to work as an artist for a local printer. Now he owns his own studio and makes good money while doing something he enjoys.

Paul Sullivan enrolled at 14. His Famous Artists training helped him work his way through college.

Kathleen Gironda of Indiana, Pennsylvania, was an 18-year-old salesgirl in a department store. She still works for a department store, but now it's as an advertising artist and fashion illustrator. Robert Rouge, of Port Jefferson, N. Y., was 18 when he started as a paste-up boy in a small ad agency. In 10 months he doubled his salary and was put in charge of one of the accounts.

Oregon housewife Helen Tryk lives 150 miles from the nearest big city. But she does fashion illustration, has her own studio, runs an art work shop, does portraits.

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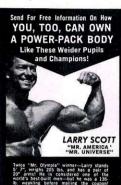
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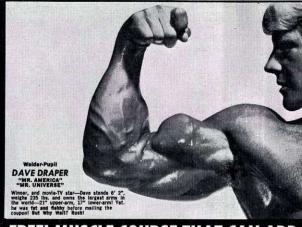
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